

Rhetorical devices and their effect on the audience

stylistic/rhetorical device	function / effect
repetition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - anaphora ("Now is the time to ...") - alliteration ("trials and tribulation") - parallelism ("I have a dream that ...") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to stress / to put special emphasis on / to point out - to emphasize/to strengthen once again/to repeat key words / major arguments / important aspects - increase in intensity /to give more impact to words - to make sth. more memorable and quotable
use of first person plural pronoun ("we, our")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to involve the listeners / readers - speaker presumes/presupposes that listeners/readers support his/her point of view/agree with him/her (It seems unreasonable not to agree with the speaker) - speaker wants to impose his/her opinion on the reader - to create the illusion of a group identity/mutual understanding ("us" against "them") - to create solidarity - speaker identifies with the audience or wants audience to identify with him/her
drastic/vivid descriptions ("left you battered by storms of persecutions and staggered by the winds of police brutality")	to appeal to ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ... the emotions rather than to reason - ... the listeners'/readers' conscience
claims (instead of well balanced arguments) ("have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny", "We cannot walk alone")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no room left for doubts / questions - speaker presumes that listeners/readers agree with him/her (appeal to general knowledge/common sense)
rhetorical questions ("Do you really believe that ...?")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to involve listeners/reader - to make them think or question old beliefs - to arouse interest / to attract attention
enumeration (to enumerate) ("The problems are caused by our cars, our electronic devices and our factories")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to emphasize / to stress sth. - to make listeners/readers aware of the extent of the problem
climax ("These are not just my priorities. They're not even just your priorities. They're not even just Hispanic or Latino priorities. These are American priorities.")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is an increase in intensity (from weakest to strongest, from minor to major problem, from individual to more general)
comparison / simile (to compare sth. to/with sth.) ("You are blind as a bat")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to arouse interest - to simplify complicated matters by referring to everyday/known experiences/phenomena

metaphor (for) /image ("manacle of segregation", "exile in his own land")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to arouse interest - to simplify complicated matters - to illustrate a point / problem - to create a vivid image in front of listener's/reader's eye
personification (to personify) ("America has given the Negro people a bad check")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to simplify matters by reducing complexity - to imply that the abstract unit can (re)act as one
symbol ("a key to advancement", "an open door to the future")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to appeal to the listeners' imagination - to refer to sth.
tense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - future tense ("This will be the day when ...") - present continuous tense ("the negro is still languishing ...") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to convey confidence and hope - to express determination /to emphasize conviction - to criticize / to stress an ongoing action
irony /sarcasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indirect criticism
exaggeration /hyperbole ("he is not a man but a demon, a monster, a subverter and an enemy")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to provoke protest - to criticize the opponent - to launch into a polemic against - to be polemic - to stress / to highlight a fact
quoting experts /authorities; referring to statistics, polls, research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to back up / support one's arguments - to eliminate doubt
direct address to the listeners /readers ("Let us (not)...", "Be not afraid", "You American people – can you ask yourselves why ...?")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to make the audience feel involved/think about sth. - to touch the listeners personally - to appeal to the listeners/readers